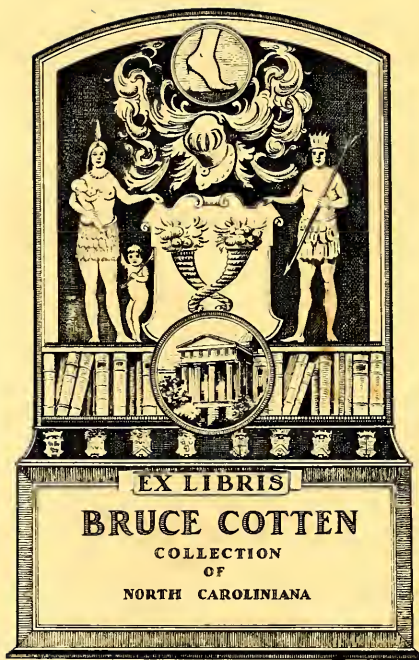


AMERICAN TELESCOPE

BY

A. CLODHOPPER

1825





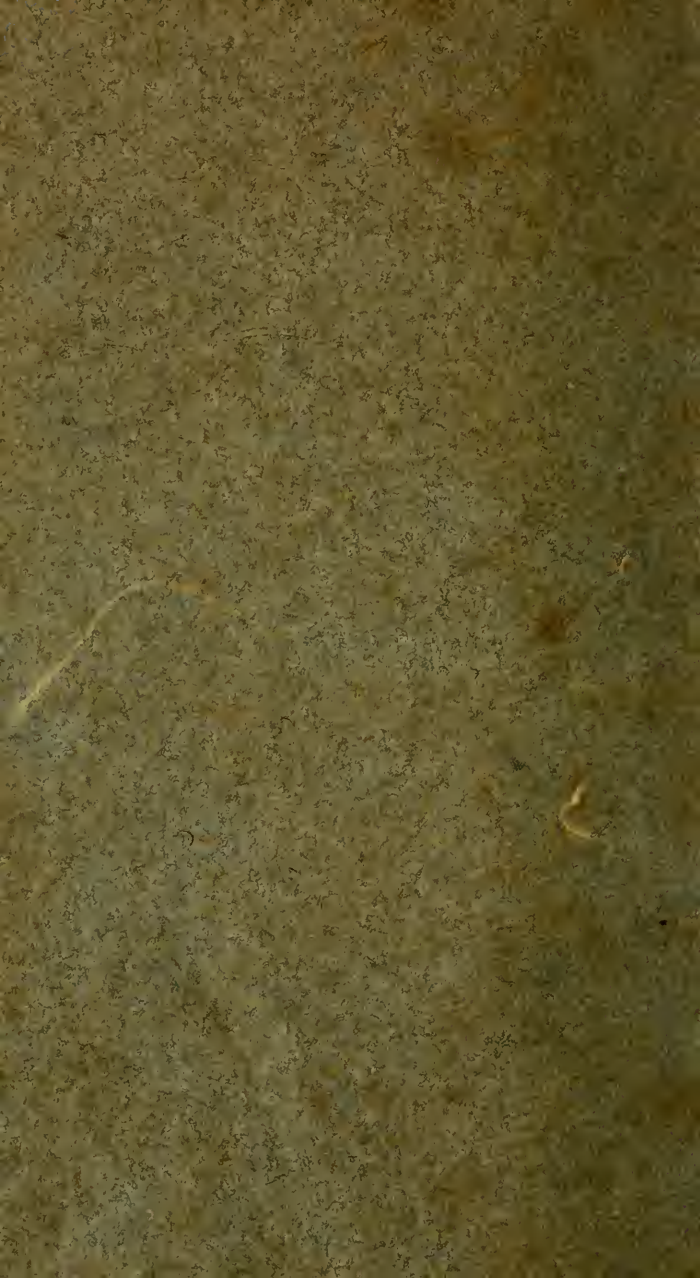


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THE
AMERICAN
TELESCOPE,

BY
A CLODHOPPER,

OF

NORTH CAROLINA.

PHILADELPHIA ;
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.
1825.



AMERICAN TELESCOPE.

IT is now about fifteen years since the Missionary cause was introduced into North Carolina, with great show of zeal, and love for the poor Indians on our continent. Their deplorable condition was depicted in the most lively colours, and with all that sympathy and apparent feeling for their poor lost souls, calculated to soften a heart of stone, and awaken in the coldest-hearted christian, the most earnest emotions for their salvation. But there was something then, and ever has been, that I dreaded as a viper full of deadly poison. Although it was glossed over with the love of souls; the worth of souls; starving souls for want of knowledge, &c. &c. with all the embellishments of fine language, and great talents in teaching; added to which, were many tears, much show of feeling, and semblance of christian sincerity; yet I could not help being filled with a jealousy, that there was death in the pot.— And I have stood as an opposer and observer ever since, and now offer the public a few thoughts, and hazard some conjectures, on the future consequences of the Missionary and other societies, abounding in our land of freedom.

In the first place, several associated bodies proceeded to appoint delegates; say, four or five from each of their respective bodies, to form a convention or Missionary board, to lay a plan for the conversion of the heathen; (for no man could be found among all the seeming feeling ones for poor Indian souls, that would comply with the command of Christ: to take neither gold, nor silver, nor scrip; neither two coats; and go into all the world and preach the gos-

pel to every creature, without money or price.)—These delegated divines, therefore, met together at —, to hold the mighty council, to form the benevolent plan of converting the Indians, quickly. And what is the result of their deliberations on so important a subject? Why, money! money! Let the people give us of their money, and the mighty work can be done. What? men do the work with money, which none but God can do by his grace and spirit! Folly indeed—but the plan was drawn, and this is as near the spirit and principle of it, as I am able to describe—

First: We must take all possible care to make the case of the Indians as bad as we can. *Secondly:* We must show with great zeal, how much our hearts feel, by affectation only, since we are not willing to go ourselves; and if need should so require to get a little more money, we must shed some tears before our congregations. *Thirdly:* Our Missionary texts must be well chosen and pathetically handled, to excite the sympathy of our hearers, and open their hearts to the Indians; and then while they are in that soft state, let a collection be made, and we shall draw plentifully from their pockets. *Fourthly:* Let various societies be formed, to take in members at one or two dollars a year, for membership; and have so much at one time to constitute one a member or a director for life, and this will greatly contribute to our getting money. *Fifthly:* Let us create titles, such as presidents, vice-presidents, corresponding secretaries, and treasurers, in these new societies, with boards of directors, and other unheard of titles of honour in the New Testament; and this will be a good bait; since men delight to be honoured, and have their names carried abroad, and no doubt cause many to do much in aiding our schemes of getting money. *Sixthly:* Let travelling beggars be appointed, crying wherever they go—*give!* give us of your money to convert the heathen. How unlike the prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, the apos-

fles, a Luther, a George Whitfield, a Wesley, a Dow, and a thousand others, who are ornaments to the free gospel of Christ; all impressed with the worth of souls; and who go forth taking up their cross, denying themselves, and devoting themselves to the work of God, for the good of men: dependant on God; without begging or being shamefully backed by monied societies.

By hard squeezing, somewhere about seven hundred and fifty dollars was collected, and deposited with Mr. Treasurer, until further orders from this board of wise divines, and set of new schemers in gospel theory. They met, and met again, from year to year, to re-organize their plan of money getting. Some years after, out comes a shameful Circular from this wise board, (when they had found out they were but men,) that if any man that had given, wanted his money back, he could have it, by applying; but that they were persuaded better things of of them that had given; (a proof of their vanity and folly; for they now plead the hostility of the Indians, and want of proper persons to teach school, &c. &c.) Soon the great and mighty institutions of foreign and domestic missions, with bible societies and theological seminaries, were circulated, with all the high encomiums that the English language could furnish; and into them, they and their perverted funds began to fall. Now, in this mighty field to do wonders, in sending the gospel to the destitute at home and abroad, to work this wise board of directors go, with redoubled ardour, setting the wisdom of all their heads to work, to invent new plans of getting more money—and how they may, by the by, handle a little of the precious stuff themselves, I shall here notice, as the people seem to bleed pretty freely.

And so, *Seventhly*: While in council they make a bargain, *you comb my head, and I will scratch your back*;—you confer on me the honourable title of gospel beggar or missionary hireling, at one dollar and

twenty-five cents per day, or forty dollars per month, if you think I have a good talent for begging; or I will beg for you, if you will pay me for my services; or I will play into your hands, if you will play into mine—share the profits. Cheat and fleece the people out of their hard earnings, upon condition you will let me beg in the name of your honourable society; for I am ashamed to beg for myself, lest the people raise the hue and cry—*money hunter, &c.*

What abominable hypocrisy! If the cause espoused be holy, just, virtuous and honourable, why not come openly out to the world, and tell the congregations that you have been hired by the board of domestic or foreign missions, for one dollar and twenty-five cents per day, to beg for them; and that the beggar and the board are to divide the money, and all over wages is to be saved for other hirelings, doctors, and reverends; then congregations would know how to act, and such characters act more worthy the Christian minister and honest man.

Eighthly: The sound destitute, destitute, destitute places of the gospel, must re-echo in all our churches, to work upon our hearers to get more money in our exhausting coffers, and keep our fingers greased; for who can go without a fine coat and plenty of money! And where have domestic missionaries gone? Have they gone to the most destitute parts of North Carolina, and other places? No. Believe me—these hirelings like to be fed on better fare than the poor can give them—they like the houses of colonels, squires, and to have very rich and fat tables and stables, where their horses will be well provided for; and to ride good roads: in short, the main point is to go about towns, and to the richest churches and neighbourhoods, where the most money is to be begged:—and their conduct proves it, with all their pretence of the love of souls. I wish, indeed, that money may not make the preacher go, as well as the mare.

These beggars keep a mighty cry about the destitute. Why not go to them, if their hearts are so affected about their condition, and then we shall have cause to say, souls, and not money, is their object. But they tell us, money is wanting; and when they have begged enough, then they are going to send preachers to the destitute. How much will be enough? They have had their thousands, and I do not yet see that the destitute places in North Carolina are a whit the better supplied; and I doubt whether they would be, if the benevolent public were to give thousands more. The beggars, in all probability, would still get the greatest part, for riding where they could sell, what they call *gospel*, to the highest bidder, and find the most money.—The conduct of some, in several instances, has proved the fact, that money was the main object. For as soon as they had got that, they have bid the churches farewell, and gone to see where they could find more.

But who are they going to send, when they get money enough? Why, say they, “men of God.” That is a mistake; God’s ministers are not hirelings; they do not divine for money, like Balaam, nor run up and down the country, hired, this way and that way, as the current of gain shifts. Nor are they anxious, like Judas, to have the bag, and receive their thirty pieces of silver. In this text, we see the character of a minister of God: “Feed the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers; taking the oversight thereof willingly, and of a ready mind, and not for filthy lucre’s sake.” But if they send ministers at all to the destitute, they will send hirelings, Judases or Balaam’s. For if they will not go for the love of God and the good of souls, but you must give them money to make them move, I contend, that money is the main-spring of action—the great wheel that gives motion to their going. The *sake*, is filthy lucre or money, since no *sake* could move them but *money*.

sake. Furnish money, and what crowds are moving in every direction, hunting money, fortunes, and places of profit. Stop the money, and you would see a squandering among these Judases at once. But, you would see God's ministers, like regular stars, moving each one in his own sphere, with his work before him, feeding the flock with life, enduring poverty and every thing else, if need be, for the cause of God, and the souls of men.—In a word, like the prophets and apostles, stemming every opposition ; and counting every thing but loss, so that they can win souls to Christ.

The true ministers of Christ are always more ready to give, than receive. But the men sent out by missionary boards, in this day, will be only a curse, instead of a blessing, to God's Israel. Their discourses, generally, are without life or substance, and are a burthen to the godly. And they squint an eye to a purse, with as much intenseness as ever Eve did at the forbidden fruit.

Some great writer has said, this is an age of wonders ; and I begin to think it is so indeed ; for the idea I used to entertain of beggars, was, that they were poor, decrepited, ragged, helpless beings, destitute of the means of supporting themselves. But how wonderfully times have changed ; for now we see hearty, hale men, and young men in the prime and vigour of life, clothed in the finest black and blue broad cloth, with fur hats, boots, spurs, silk jackets, silver tipped bridles and stirrups, watches, &c. &c. turned beggars—great beggars. They tell us, they beg for the sake of Christ and the heathen ; but fortunately for us all, these fellows cannot keep the cat in the wallet ; for one of these northern beggars, not long since, passed through North Carolina, and being asked how much he had collected, he said about two thousand dollars. And pray, sir, said the inquirer, what per centum do they give you for begging ? He said his fees would come to about four hundred dollars. And pray, sir, are you a preacher

too : said the inquirer, looking gravely in his face ? O yes ! said he, I attempt to preach as I go—hanging down his head, and throwing his fine broad cloth legs over each other, and twisting his watch key. Yes, and I think, said the man, a great many of you had better be at work, than going about in the garb of a preacher, as you pretend, begging the poor labourers for their money ; for you look more like a doctor, or a young lawyer, with your frizzled foretop and fine clothing, than a preacher. And, I suppose, the North Carolinians might have went to hell for your preaching, if it had not been for the four hundred dollars you expected to get. No, he replied, I don't know that I should have come, but the society hired me to come, and I must live somehow ; and you'll give something, will you not ? No, that I wont, said the man. If I have got any thing to give, I will give it to our old preacher, who will preach whether we pay him or not ; and not to such fellows as you, who are riding about dressed up in your fine broad cloth, hunting a rich wife, and begging money ; while I must wear my old tow trowsers, and work in the hot sun to maintain such fellows. No, that I wont, repeated the man. O yes ! but you can, I know, and will give me something, continued the beggar. I will not, was the reply.

These beggars are like hungry mosquitoes—knock them off, and they will at you again, and again, until they suck your money, if possible. Say, and prove, if any man can, that there is one trait of true apostolic character in these fellows, and the controversy will be at an end. Their love of money has betrayed them, as it did Simon Magus. Sent out by missionary boards, and not by Jesus Christ, they look for profit by fleecing the people ; lugging the cause of God, and the care of the heathen in, to aid them in getting money.

Another deep-laid scheme to get money, is, to draw up the most affecting and sympathetic addresses, to publish in their circulating reports, in

which the very bowels of antiquity are often ransacked, to get something that may touch the feelings of the community ; for no other purpose, but to get their money. A combination of the best talents are employed to form one of these Circulars, which, at best, to say no worse of them, are nothing but money speculations, human contrivances, and pompous expressions, to deceive the hearts of the simple, and live on their spoil.

Some thousands have been sent to India, to support the lovers of money there, and turn that land of heathenism into a Paradise of saints. And what has been done there ? What mighty works have been wrought by all the hundred of thousands of dollars that have been expended, and all the numerous missionaries that have been sent, from this and other countries ! I have heard, as with the trumpet's fame, that about three hundred persons have been, at last, persuaded to renounce *cast* and turn Christian, after fifteen or twenty years' labour ; when a single Peter, a Paul, a Luther, a Whitfield, a Wesley, and others, being sent of God, have done more in a few days or weeks, without the aid of self-created societies, and monied institutions, and numerous beggars not sanctioned by the word of God, nor found in the pages of the New Testament. As the churches in this country are now going on, they will soon be no better than the church of Rome, and the High Church of England ; for money and titles have always been the object of Popes and Popish priests, and also of the clergy of the Church of England, who once had the command of sixteen thousand weight of tobacco, annually, in this country, to turn into money. Titles and money have always corrupted the ministry, and they have already began to disgrace it in North Carolina. The same causes will always produce like effects ; and let the true children of God watch and beware.

But to quiet our fears, and make us tamely acquiesce, while the "reverend" clergy cut the strings

of our purses, and put the yoke of tyranny snug on our necks, they tell us the mind of God is with his people. If they were to tell me the mind of the devil was with many in this day, who profess to be his servants, I could readily believe it. Can the mind of God be, where the whole soul is engaged in schemes to get money!! Look and see, if you find such a spirit with the prophets, John the Baptist, and the apostles. No, indeed! But be still, say they; this is the way God is about to usher in the glorious millennium. Rather, I say, it is the way that the devil will soon triumph over all true religion, and aggrandize his transformed ministers, and make them pensioners of state. Money and education are power; and in the management of skillful hands, great effects may, in a short time, be produced.

Can one instance be shown, from the first of Genesis to the last of the Revelation, where God has ever made money a means of spreading his religion? Has it not been done by humble and unaustentatious persons, specially chosen of God, without any call for money? Look at a Jonah, Peter, Paul, and Barnabas, all sent on special missions. We hear nothing of money or backing societies, before they can go: but now thousands must be had on hand, and good promises for more of the precious stuff, before our missionaries can move a peg. And I leave the reader to judge, what side such missionaries belong to.

But it seems that the mind of God is not always with his people, much less, with those that call themselves his people, but are in reality the devil's people; or if the devil does not personally preside in the chair as president, yet he votes in the voters, and that is as good, and much better; because, he acts in the back ground, unsuspected; and you shall see who turns the wheel.

Was the mind of God with the great Baptist Association of Virginia, when they created Samuel

Harris Apostle of Virginia? Did not the devil turn the wheel there? We laugh at the folly now, of that set of wise ministers; and so will posterity, in years to come, at all the unscriptural works of darkness now going on, where the devil turns the wheel. And who can help thinking the devil turns the wheel; where money is but too plainly seen to be the object of each and every movement.

Was the mind of God with his church and people of Israel, at the foot of Mount Horeb, when the people said to that great saint, Aaron: "Come make us gods to go before us into Egypt; for as for this Moses, we wist not what has become of him:"—and gave him their gold, jewels and bracelets, of which he made the idol calf; and kicked up such a mighty dust, dancing around the god of their own making.

Was the mind of God with his people, when Jeroboam made the two golden calves, and set one in Dan and the other in Bethel, and said, "these are thy gods O Israel?" Rather, does it not show the consequences of the Church of God being connected with the great men of this world; for then the devil will be sure to turn the wheel. And while our Missionary, bible, and tract societies, and theological schools, are connected with the men of this world, the devil is sure to turn the wheel, and give the casting vote in his favour.

Was the mind of God with the church at Corinth, when they perverted the right use of the Lord's supper?

Was the mind of God with the church of Rome, when they began to create titles, bishops, cardinals, arch-bishops, universal bishop, sovereign pontiff, Christ's vicar, prince of the apostles, &c. &c.—These measures were as innocent, I conceive, in their first appearance, as presidents, vice-presidents, corresponding secretaries, recording secretaries, board of directors, &c. which are all unscriptural titles, names and offices, unbecoming God's people.

And where did these titles lead to in the end? Why they came up to our lord god the Pope, sovereign Pontiff over the whole world; having the keys of heaven, hell, and purgatory; and whoever would go in, must pay toll to his holiness the Pope, and bow to what he thought right, or enter the hellish inquisition, and suffer death in the most horrid forms. All this was brought about by getting off gospel ground, under the show of religion, out of the warrant of the New Testament. Shall we not then take care of those innocent things you call titles, the corrupters of the Church of God. These are the scorpions that have stings in their tails, and have stricken thousands to ruin. Oh ye sons of Columbia! stand up and look round yourselves; and behold what strides are making by an ever-busy clergy, to forge the chains of tyranny for your bodies and consciences! Be alarmed, before your necks are in the yoke—for these things must come in side-ways, or as an entering wedge; and one step off from gospel ground, gives room for another, until death is in the pot, and the devil at the wheel.

Was the mind of God with his people, when the dissenting clergy from popery in England, appointed king Henry head of the Church, and parliament the guardians of its affairs!! See what followed: persecution, religious taxation, fines and imprisonment throughout England—the clergy prompting those in power, to do these things for their own gain. Surely the devil turned the wheel, and voted in the voters. And does it not show us, as a beacon, on our own coast, how we should endeavour to keep the Church apart from any influence of the men of this world; for they know not the things of the spirit; and hence their influence is always bad. But the clergy want to get hold of their fat purses, and this is the way they have taken to do it: to build a sort of National Church, and let them come into it for pay; having a fixed price for members, directors, and presidents for life; and so

they make a sort of half-brothers of the governors and rich men of this world.

As for God's putting it in the hearts of his people to go this way to work to convert the world, it is what I cannot yet believe. For God cannot change, nor do I think he will change his plan of carrying on his work ;—and what monied institutions and societies do we find, supporting the prophets among the Jews ;—or what self-created bodies for obtaining money, backed the apostles and first preachers of the gospel ? Let some example, or authority, be shown from the word of God, if it can be. The authority of men will not answer for me, in a business of such importance. Give me—thus saith the Lord, or else give up the point.

Did monied societies support the Reformers ? No ; they hazarded all, and suffered the loss of all things for the sake of Christ. Hence we see, that this modern practice of spreading religion by means of money, and monied societies, is neither sanctioned by the word of God, nor the example of the prophets, the apostles, or the reformers ; but well agrees with the Church of Rome, and high Church of England. The cry of money, money, is heard throughout the Church of Rome, from the pope to the friar ; and in the Church of England, from the bishop down to the warden constable.

Has God, after four thousand years, changed his plan of carrying on his work ? Or has He lately seen that monied institutions are necessary means for converting the world ? Certainly not, but the Lord's way of carrying on his work, does not suit men of high minds, who want to be gods themselves, and wrest from his hands the power of making christians in his own way ; and prescribe paths for Jehovah to walk in that may please themselves, and the men of this world. Where, in all the Scriptures, shall we find any self-created societies, and monied institutions, to advance the cause of true religion ! And if they cannot be found there, a man must be blind not to see that they are mere human inven-

tions ; and that the devil is turning the wheel ; and will only corrupt the Church, and make mankind more degenerate and wicked.

Monied institutions have supported the church of Rome, and high church of England, in their thirst for aggrandizement, and to lord it over the consciences of men. But dissenters, in no age, until of late, or about a century, have needed any such support. As for the Gospel, one of its chief glories is, that it stands on the arm of Omnipotence, and commends itself to the consciences of men—making its way through the kingdoms of this world, in spite of all opposition. Though the heathen rage, and kings, and governors, and rulers of this world, have stood up against the Gospel and God's anointed, and have employed prisons, gibbets, flames, and death, in all their torturing forms, yet have they not prevailed.

And how is it, that the rulers of this world, and the rich, and noble of the earth, who have in all ages opposed the Gospel, and voted against it, have now become its votaries and supporters!! I would as soon believe that the devil is turned a saint at last, as to believe this thing—that human nature should be so changed without a work of grace upon the heart. The truth lies here ; the men of this world have always been willing to support that which was called Gospel, or a form of religion, but not the thing itself ; for that they hate, and have in all ages of the world. To support the mere form of religion, or a false religion, corrupt men have always been ready enough. Witness their readiness to support idolatry—to support the See of Rome—the Crusades! the Pagan—Mahometan, and all such false and formal religions ! Witness how zealous the Pharisees were to support their forms of error, and the traditions of the elders, at the expence of the blood of Christ and his apostles ! Witness the Pagan emperors, putting hundreds of thousands to death, to support their absurd Paganism ! Witness the high church of England, and church of Rome, de-

stroying and persecuting the most pious in their borders, to support a form of godliness of their own invention, suited to the taste of corrupt lords, dukes, kings, queens, and emperors! Can I, with all these truths before me, and many more, believe that the pompous proceedings, and monied schemes of the present day, are of God!! It is only because the devil is in all these schemes and inventions, that his children support them, and honour them with their presence and approbation. This one circumstance is sufficient to convince me that these great works are not of God, and will only prove an injury to the cause of true religion.

It is certain, that all the pomp and show we now see, for promoting the Lord's work, will at last be brought to naught; because it is not the way of God's choosing. And he will clear all this rubbish away, and afterwards work in his own way, and by instruments of his own choice. For our Lord saith, "marvel not that the world hate you; for you know it hated me before it hated you. It hateth me, because I testify the deeds thereof are evil." What then! do natural men support him and his cause, when they have hated him and his cause in all ages? How inconsistent in itself! It is supporting the thing in appearance only, or that which has a show of the cause of Christ, but which, in reality, is the devil's cause in masquerade. And this has been the manner of the devil, from the days of Cain, down to Constantine the Great; to set up a form of religion, in opposition to the true religion by grace and faith, and maintain it in the world, by men of this world; condemning, killing, and destroying, by a thousand infernal tortures, all the children of God that oppose it. But, in the days of Constantine, he seems to have come to his senses; and, as if he saw, that the massacre of millions could not stop the progress of the religion of Jesus Christ; or, as if gorged with blood, or satisfied with cruelty, he comes to a cessation of arms, all on a sudden; and sits still, as an idle spectator, for a good while. During this time,

Constantine repeals all persecuting laws, and then establishes religion by law ; honouring the ministers of the Gospel—giving them salaries, and making every thing in religion grand, rich and pompous.

But how soon does the devil improve on this plan, and turn all into shew and form again ;—and then follows persecution of the saints ; which has shown itself more or less in every country throughout Christendom. In England, though they cast off the cruel yoke of Popery, yet they set up the idol of uniformity ; manifesting the same persecuting spirit, and contending, by kings, queens, lords of parliament, magistrates, and constables, for the support of a form of godliness, and will-worship ; at the same time, opposing the Gospel in its purity and simplicity ; and fining and imprisoning those who adhered to it. How dangerous then is a form of religion, armed with the civil power ! and how dangerous to trust a body of learned and monied clergy, with any kind of power. Our fathers who composed the convention to form the Constitution of the State of North Carolina, knew the danger of these men ; therefore, inserted an article that no minister of the Gospel, having the cure of souls, should have a seat in either house of the Legislature. They had tasted the gall and venom of this tribe of money-getting characters, and therefore, guarded against them in that article. And if it were not for this article, we should see them electioneering, this way and that way, to get into the Legislature. And could they once obtain an ascendancy in the government, they would ride *rough-shod* over the consciences and property of the people, like all other tyrants. There would be no danger in letting the good become members, but to keep out the bad and designing, our fathers thought best to keep all out—and they were right.

It has been said, that money and education are power. And does not money and education fill the offices of state ? Does not money and education levy war, and carry it on ? What would America have

done in the revolution, had it not been for her wise counsellors, continental money, and the silver crowns of France ! And what would the missionary societies do for runners and beggars, if it were not for money ! What would the Pope of Rome have done for priests to carry about his indulgences and pardons to sell, had it not been for money, a part of which went to pay the priests for their trouble, and the balance was for the Pope to carry on his schemes. It is just so with many of our modern priests : money causes them to go about ; a part of what they get they have for begging ; and the balance is for the Board of Directors to carry on their plans and schemes. And what they will do in the end, time only can reveal. We see them now making mighty strides in every part of the union, to get hold of money, and what new tricks and schemes are to be played under the mask of religious benevolence to attain something out of view, and not heretofore known in the devil's politics, is left wholly to conjecture.

I have been told of late, the Baptists were like Israel without a king. Now the Israelites desired Samuel to ask the Lord to give them a king that they might be like the nations around them, and have a great man to fight their battles and go in and out before them, but some of our modern Baptists are not so condescending to God as Israel was, to ask of him a great man, or men to go before them ; or agreeably to the words of Christ, " pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out more labourers into his vineyard ;" but to be like the Church of England, and the Presbyterians around them, they have without any authority from the Lord, set up a priestly polishing machine at head quarters, to polish over young men, and make great ministers of them, to fight their battles and go in and out before them. Are they afraid to trust their cause with God any longer, and so have rejected him after enjoying his protection such a length of time, and will they now depend on an arm of flesh ?

The church of Rome, and other churches, tried the experiment of making great learned divines, and soon these great divines, bishops, parsons, curates and friars, must have great salaries, and be maintained in high dignity by the people. And so it will be with these young doctors from head quarters, after going through the polishing machine ; for, work they cannot, though they will not be ashamed to beg, since it has become fashionable for divines in broad cloth to follow this trade. I should like to know how many we have among us that would rather go to doctor Greatman for instruction, than to Jesus Christ, and would prefer to show themselves approved men for talents and learning, than study to show themselves approved of God for a holy, pious, humble life ; or diligence in the ministry, knowledge of the holy Scriptures, having their ministry written on the tables of many hearts—by the power of the spirit of God attending their unpolished discourses, to the salvation of men !

If what I hear be true, that there are about twelve thousand in all the various polishing machines in this country, preparing themselves to hunt fortunes, live without work, and to please the world, and these like devouring locusts, are soon to be let loose, flying to the most populous towns and cities, and looking about in every hole and corner of the union, where the fattest purse is to be had ; in order to live on the labours of others, in pomp and style—for one, I pray, they may keep away from North Carolina ; for we have fortune hunters and beggars enough already, who produce disputes, jars and discord among brethren of the same church, if we refuse to give, and are unwilling to be stripped of our hard earnings ; while our every-day, but faithful and humble ministers, are neglected, and can scarcely procure decent clothing, and provide the necessaries of life for themselves and families.

But we are told by some of our doctors and reverends, that they do not undertake to make ministers out of any sort of men ;—that they do not think to

change the heart, or call any one to the ministry. This, they let us know, they leave for God to do ; while their machine is for giving *the last polish—the finishing touch* to their qualifications ; which operation, is considered far superior, to enable them to please men, than any thing God has done to them, or can be expected to do. Now, in the name of the best of causes, and for its sake, I ask them, to give me example or precept from the word of God, or show any of the prophets, John the Baptist, or any of the apostles, who, after being called of God to their respective missions, that ever went to school, or to study under Dr. Greatman, in order to learn how to preach, or what to preach ! No example or precept from the word of God, can be produced in support of such a practice ; and it is evident, that these theological schools, or machines for polishing ministers, are the inventions of the devil, who is working in the back ground, to undermine the Church of God, and corrupt the ministry and society in general, and fill the world with oppression, wretchedness, and misery.

Look, and see, among the prophets and apostles, whether the Lord had such respect to education and learning ! What sort of men did he choose, for the most part, to preach his gospel ? and what sort of men has he chosen, in all ages of the Church, to declare his counsel unto men ? Peter, John, and all the apostles, Paul excepted, were unlearned and unlettered men ; yet, Christ made this no bar, hindrance, or disqualification, to their being his apostles ; and generally, in all ages of the Church, God has chosen the poor and unlearned to preach his word ; and made them mighty, through grace, to the pulling down of the strong holds of satan's kingdom ; in order, that the power might be of God, and not of men. This cannot be denied ; yet our doctors of divinity are trying to pervert the order of God, or help him to finish the work of qualifying ministers. Hear Paul's observations on ministers, &c. " God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to con-

found the wise ; and the weak things of the world, the base, the despised, and things which are not, hath God chosen :” for what? *that no flesh should glory in his presence.* And these observations agree with God’s conduct in the choice of ministers in all ages, except in a few cases. But our wise and learned doctors, have found out a more excellent way, they think, than God’s way ;—they are going to instruct and polish numerous young men for the ministry. They may ruin them, but they cannot better them, unless it be to please men. To better them, to please God or profit his church and people, they cannot. For preaching is a gift—the gift of God ; and what doctors of divinity are not able to give.

I do not think myself guilty of a breach of religious charity, in saying, that these polishing machines, lately established for qualifying young men to preach, are of the devil, and from high-minded men, who want to maintain their cause by human strength, and an arm of flesh. These high-minded doctors seem, indeed, to me, like some men, who dislike their Maker’s work, in making the handsome and elegant horse. Say some, his ears are too long—they must be cropt ;—say others, his tail hangs too much down,—he must be nicked before he can please us : and to work they go, to better the Creator’s work, or to make a horse to their own liking. Just so with our learned doctors : after God has converted and called a poor young man to the ministry, and furnished him with every needful qualification, and directed him to go and preach his gospel, it will not answer—he does not please the doctors—he does not speak grammar, nor is he eloquent enough to command the respect of the people. He is not even polite in his manners, and does not know how to conduct himself properly in genteel company. He must be altered before he will answer for a preacher, or be able to please the people, and obtain a salary. Thus the proud and high-minded of this world, have, in all ages, set at naught God’s ministers, and have heaped up to themselves teach-

ers, having itching ears, who have sounded forth their own praise, and had an eye to the purse.


But God's ministers seek not to go forth in the excellency of speech, and of man's wisdom; for they know that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and they wish to speak as of the ability which God giveth them. But something of the hands of man must be on ministers in this day, before they can preach to please; and to work doctors go, to make them more than God has thought proper to do. Thus they become deformed and disfigured; first, by cropping their long ears of humility in dress and manners, and giving them a proud, dressy carriage, and the polite manners of a young lawyer—which in a minister of the humble Jesus, is more offensive to the pious, than the vilest reptile. Secondly, they learn them to run straight for the purse; and, where the most money and the largest salaries are to be got. Thirdly, they learn them to speak in high flown words, and pompous expressions, so that the poor and unlearned are not able to understand them; and thus they become as barbarians to them that hear. Fourthly, they are made to despise the poor, of which class they once were, before made gentlemen, fortune-hunters, &c. Fifthly, all equality among ministers is destroyed; and, at length, none must be allowed to preach at all, unless they are learned men: and thus the apostles will be put in the back ground, as well as most of God's ministers, and the devil will bear the chief sway in all the churches. Then, all who live godly in Christ Jesus, will suffer persecution, as in former times; for, unregenerate and high minded priests, have been the greatest persecutors of the righteous in every age of the world.

When doctors and reverends saunter, and hanker about state legislators, members of congress, and fawn on governors, and chief men of state, cringing and begging, it is time for Americans to look out. They are not walking in the footsteps of the Apostles, but are seeking their own ends; and are endea-

vouring to bring together church and state. Nay, it seems, this unnatural connexion is now begun, if we look at the minutes of the Missionary, Tract, Bible and Theological Education Societies, and see whose names are there enrolled as donors, officers, &c. &c.

The Emperor Constantine, and his men of state, with the clergy's juggling together, produced the devil in the end, though all was fair weather at first, as it is now among us. But storms gathered, and at length burst forth in fury and destruction to the people of God. The kings of England, parliament, and the clergy, began to play into each others hands—and what has been the effect? Let us beware of new and unscriptural projects.—Look at Peter the Hermit, in rags, running bare-foot from city to city, preaching up the crusades, or holy wars as they were termed—drawing kingdoms into this popular scheme, and causing the destruction of about thirteen thousand lives in this foolish new project. What destruction is witnessed, when church and state meet together! Look at the priests in France, with crucifixes in their hands, encouraging the blood-thirsty Catholics in the murder of sixty thousand Protestants in a night! Look at the Pope of Rome, sending his priests to Baptise at the point of the sword; and, because the Welchmen refused, slaughtered them by thousands! Look at king George, sending his learned priests into this country, and fixing a salary on them of sixteen thousand pounds of tobacco a year, to maintain them in idleness, luxury and pride! Look at the whippings and imprisonings of the Baptists, in Virginia, and other states, by means of these same well fed priests! Money and learning out of their proper place, or improperly used, corrupt the church and ministry of God. And these corrupting societies overturn any government, however strong its foundation may be at first laid. Because, there is a combination of talents, interest and party spirit; which if strong enough, will prevail over all impediments, destroy

liberty of conscience, establish its own power, and fill the land with oppression, wretchedness and misery. Money is a good thing—education is a good thing—power is a good thing—law is a good thing—and death is a good thing—but, they must all stand in their proper place—be used by a proper hand—regulated by a right spirit, and for a right end; else they become scourges of the worst kind to human beings.

 *It is deemed proper to state, that the author of the foregoing pages is a member of the Baptist Church, in North Carolina, in very respectable standing. This statement, however, is made, without the knowledge or consent of the writer.*





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